AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A molding device for producing containers by blow molding or stretch blow molding from preforms made of a heated thermoplastic, said device comprising at least one mold ~~(1) consisting of~~ comprising at least two half-molds **[[**(1a, 1b)**]]**, mutually displaceable between an open position in which they are separated from one another and a closed position in which they are tightly pressed against one another by respective cooperating bearing faces **[[**(2a, 2b)**]]**, defining a joint plane **[[**(3)**]]**, the two half-molds **[[**(1a, 1b)**]]** having at least two respective corresponding edges **[[**(15a, 15b)**]]** of their respective bearing faces **[[**(2a, 2b)**]]** which are radially designed in the form of two mutually overlapping edges with respective opposing mating faces **[[**(16a, 16b)**]]** in the closed position of the mold, locking means **[[**(14)**]]** being functionally associated with said overlapping edges, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said locking means (14) are designed in the following manner:

- one of said overlapping edges **[[**(15a)**]]** located on the inside has a mating face (internal mating face) **[[**(16a)**]]** which terminates in a hook **[[**(17a)**]]** and which has a recess **[[**(18a)**]]** adjacent to the hook;

- the other of said overlapping edges **[[**(15b)**]]** located on the outside has a mating face (external mating face) **[[**(16b)**]]** which terminates in a hook **[[**(17b)**]]** and which has a recess **[[**(18b)**]]** adjacent to the hook;

- said respective hooks [[(17a, 17b)]] and recesses [[(18a, 18b)]] of said internal [[(15a)]] and external [[(15b)]] overlapping edges extend substantially over the entire height of the mold;

- a gib [[(19)]] extending substantially over the entire height of the mold is mounted rotatably about a pin [[(20)]] corresponding to one of its edges in one of said recesses and in contact with the respective hook; and

- drive means are functionally associated with said gib [[(19)]] for pivoting about its pin [[(20)]] between two extreme positions,

whereby the gib [[(19)]] may occupy two functional positions, namely:

- a position inserted into its mounting recess in which the gib [[(19)]] does not engage the opposing recess of the other overlapping edge and allows a mutual relative displacement of the two half-molds (opening and closing of the mold); and

- a projecting position in which the gib [[(19)]] is pivoted toward the outside of its mounting recess and - the two half-molds [[(1a, 1b)]] being in the closed position - engages in the opposing recess of the other overlapping edge such that, when the two half-molds [[(1a, 1b)]] are subjected to forces separating them from one another (pre-blow molding, blow molding), said gib [[(19)]] is engaged with the two respective hooks [[(17a, 17b)]] of the two overlapping edges [[(15a, 15b)]] and mechanically holds the two half-molds [[(1a, 1b)]].

2. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in claim 1, in which the mold **[[**(1)**]]** is of the jackknife type with the two half-molds **[[**(1a, 1b)**]]** mutually articulated in rotation on a shaft (8) substantially parallel to one side of the joint plane **[[**(3)**]]**, ~~characterized in that~~ and wherein said locking means **[[**(14)**]]** are provided on the side of the mold opposing said shaft [[(8)]] of the two half-molds.

3. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in claim 1 ~~or 2~~, in which each half-mold **[[**(1a, 1b)**]]** comprises a mold carrier **[[**(5a, 5b)**]]** to which is fixed internally a shell [[(6a, 6b)]] provided with a mold half-impression **[[**(4a, 4b)**]]**, the joint plane **[[**(6)**]]** being defined by the two shells [[(6a, 6b)]] pressed against one another in the closed position of the mold, ~~characterized in that~~ and wherein the locking means [[(14)]] are supported by the two mold carriers [[(5a, 5b)]].

4. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 3,~~ ~~characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the gib is supported by said internal overlapping edge.

5. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 4,~~ ~~characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the respective hooks [[(17a, 17b)]] of said two overlapping edges **[[**(15a, 15b)**]]** and the gib **[[**(19)**]]** extend continuously, substantially over the entire height of the mold.

6. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the gib **[[**(19)**]]** and at least the hook of the opposing overlapping edge extend discontinuously, substantially over the entire height of the mold.

7. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 6, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the gib [[(19)]] is supported in rotation, on or by its pin, with radial play.

8. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1, this device being of the carousel type and mobile in rotation, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the drive means functionally associated with the gib **[[**(19)**]]** consist of at least one idler roller [[(24)]] supported, by means of a return mechanism, by one end of a rotating shaft of the gib, said roller being capable of cooperating with a fixed guide cam arranged laterally on the rotating carousel.

9. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the drive means of the gib **[[**(19)**]]** consist of a return spring **[[**(25)**]]** capable of returning the gib **[[**(19)**]]** into said inserted position thereof.

10. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the drive means of the gib [[(19)]] consist of a return spring [[(25)]] capable of returning the gib [[(19)]] into said projecting position thereof.